

A BIKE FACILITY FOR ALL AGES & ABILITIES:
EFFECTIVE. SAFER. POPULAR.
VETTED. APPROVED. CA HDM & MUTCD-COMPLIANT.

Class IV Separated Bikeways: Approved for Use in California

An easy guide for implementation
by the California Bicycle Coalition



"There was a need in our city to connect the Modesto Junior College East and West campus—so we repurposed one lane of this high speed roadway to create a Separated Bikeway while doing routine maintenance. People love the separated bikeway and it makes the two mile connection a lower stress facility through separation from vehicles."

—Michael Sacuskie, Associate Engineer/Bicycle Program Coordinator
Phillip Soares, PE, TE, Associate Civil Engineer/Traffic Engineer
City of Modesto

Common Concerns

Class IV Separated Bikeways are brand new in many communities and are sure to raise a lot of questions. Worry not, we're here to help.

Will my city be liable for Separated Bikeways?

NO Caltrans design immunity extends to Class IV facilities in the same capacity as it exists for the other three classes of bike facilities.

Do Separated Bikeways violate CA HDM rules?

NO The design guidelines issued by Caltrans for Separated Bikeways work in tandem with CA HDM rules. For any components of the project where you are concerned about violating design rules, the CA HDM clearly states that cities are only required to document their variations from the design manual and document them.

Will Separated Bikeways be more dangerous at intersections or driveways?

NO Driveways and intersections are deserving of extra attention when planning a Separated Bikeway, but are by no means a dealbreaker. As long as you provide clear sightlines and additional striping, driveway crossings can be made safer than current conditions. Intersections require more attention, and many examples already exist around the state for how to plan for them appropriately—including protected intersections and crossings.

Are Separated Bikeways more expensive?

NOT ALWAYS There are a lot of design approaches when implementing Separated Bikeways, some of which can be done for very little money. Separated Bikeways will also be much more competitive for grant funding like HSIP or ATP.



Austin, TX



San Francisco, CA



Chicago, IL



Alameda, CA



Cambridge, MA



Seattle, WA

Your Community Deserves the Best Bikeways

Sometimes called “protected bike lanes” or “cycle tracks”, the Separated Bikeway is recognized across the country and around the globe as one of the best and safest ways to get more people of all ages and abilities riding bikes. Now that Separated Bikeways are approved for use in California, implementation in your community is easier than ever.

What is a Separated Bikeway?

- Separated Bikeways are on-street facilities reserved for use by bicyclists, with physical separation between the bikeway and travel lanes
- Separated Bikeways can be one-way facilities on both sides of the street or two-way facilities on one side of the street
- Physical separation can include concrete curbs, landscaping, parking lanes, bollards, or other vertical elements
- Class IV Separated Bikeways are **not** Class I shared-use paths or Class II bike lanes, as they are on-street yet physically separated from vehicle traffic



Hundreds of miles of Separated Bikeways have already been implemented and used by millions of people riding bikes from coast to coast in the United States, thanks to transportation leaders focused on enhancing the safety, comfort, and options for mobility in their communities.

Why Build Separated Bikeways?

- Get more people to ride bikes by providing the safety, comfort, and separation most people want and need to consider bicycling ([San Francisco Study](#))
- Improve safety for bicyclists, drivers, and pedestrians ([NYC](#), [Chicago](#))
- Increase sales in business districts ([Salt Lake City](#), [NYC DOT](#))
- Boost property values ([Indianapolis](#))

Since separated bike lanes are physically separated from vehicular traffic, almost all users (96 percent) feel safer as a result of the separation, which can help attract new riders.

—“Lessons from the Green Lanes: Evaluating Protected Bike Lanes in the U.S.” National Institute for Transportation and Communities (2014)



“I am so proud of the new bike lanes we have opened. Our first protected lanes on Telegraph are a critical part of making Oakland a more vibrant, safe, and sustainable city.”

— City of Oakland’s Mayor Libby Schaaf, May 31, 2016



LEARN MORE

There are many sources, including links below, for more information on Class IV Separated Bikeways and unique design guidance in California.

Caltrans Class IV Bikeway Guidance

FHWA Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide

NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide

MassDOT Separated Bike Lane Planning & Design Guide

Alta Planning + Design Evolution of Protected Intersection White Paper



COVER IMAGE: CITY OF MODESTO COURTESY OF MICHAEL SACUSKIE, ABOVE LEFT: OAKLAND SEPARATED BIKEWAY PICTURES COURTESY OF ALTA PLANNING + DESIGN, OTHER PHOTOS OF LONG BEACH SEPARATED BIKEWAY PICTURES COURTESY OF ALLAN CRAWFORD